

25X1A

2125-63  
Page 9 of 10

20 MAR 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR : Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : CUCART Program Status

1. Since the first flight of an CUCART A-12 aircraft, 26 April 1962, 160 flights, totaling 204127 flight hours, have been made with five aircraft at [redacted]. Eighteen flights totaling fifteen hours occurred with an aircraft equipped with one J-75 and one J-58 engine and eleven flights totaling nine hours with aircraft configured with two J-58 engines. Henceforth, all but two aircraft (trainer and a test aircraft) will be equipped with J-58 engines. Eventually all aircraft will be retrofitted with J-58 engines.

25X1A

2. Five A-12 aircraft now are in flight test. On 20 March, a sixth aircraft was delivered to [redacted]. Attachment #1 contains a delivery schedule for the remaining nine A-12 aircraft of the fifteen under procurement.

25X1A

3. Until recently the most serious roadblock on the program was the critical shortage of J-58 engines. Presently seventeen of the fifty-seven engines under procurement have been delivered. Production and testing of the highly complex engine fuel controls are the pacing factors.

4. The aircraft, engines and other critical components, including the inertial navigation system, stability augmentation system, autopilot, air induction system, pilot environment equipment, [redacted], all specifically developed for the program, have performed reasonably well within the limits of testing so far in the flight test program. The usual routine problems have been encountered and system debugging and optimization of equipments is underway.

25X1A

25X1A

[redacted]

25X1A  
25X1B

to Soviet Air Defense studies and [redacted] are being given

25X1A

Handls  
Control System

25X1A

2423-03  
Page 2

high priority attention. This aspect of the program will require constant effort both on the part of the analysts and those developing the vehicle and the operational procedures for its use.

4. In the next few months maximum effort will be directed to reaching intended speed and altitude in the flight test program so that the aircraft, related systems, equipment and sensors can be checked under the high temperature and high altitude environment. The top speed and altitude thus far obtained in flight test has been Mach 2.49 and 70,000 feet. Meanwhile, four of eventual ten operational pilots selected in the A-12 and are undergoing training. Bases for aerial refueling tankers are being located and other logistical and operational preparations are underway.

Original signed by  
S. J. Miller

WILLIAM J. COFFIN, JR.  
Deputy Director  
(Research)

cc: DCI

Attachment:

1 - Aircraft Delivery Schedule

Signature Recommended:

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JACK E. LEAFORD  
Colonel, USAF  
Assistant Director, OSA

C/DD/OSA/JF:rel  
(20 March 1963)

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25X1A

25-63

Attachment # 1

A-12 AIRCRAFT DELIVERY STATUS

<u>Aircraft</u>	<u>Delivery To Test Site</u>
#121 - #126	Now at site
127	14 May 1963
128	11 June 1963
129	30 July 1963
130	11 September 1963
*131	22 October 1963
*132	11 November 1963
*133	17 December 1963
*134	January 1964
*135	February 1964

\*Air Force aircraft

A-12 (REFUGEE) DELIVERY STATUS

<u>Aircraft</u>	<u>Delivery To Test Site</u>
#1001	June 1963
1002	August 1963
1003	November 1963